



## **Charging and Remissions Policy**

### **Rationale**

As a Christian school with strong Christian values Packington Church of England Primary School aims to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that is enriched through a wide variety of additional experiences. These take place both on and off the school site and all activities are chosen to support the children's learning and the school's ethos.

The Education Act 1996 clarifies the activities for which charges can be made or voluntary contributions sought and gives schools the discretion to charge for optional activities, provided wholly or mainly out of the school hours and the right to invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school or in support of any activity organised by the school whether during or after school hours.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the charging policy are:

- To ensure activities offered in school time should be available to all pupils regardless of their parents' ability or willingness to help meet the cost.
- To identify those activities for which charges may be levied.
- To invite voluntary contributions for the benefit of the school in support of any activities organised by the school either during or outside school hours.

### **Charges**

The Governing Body reserves the right to make a charge in the following circumstances allowed by the Act:

- The provision of music tuition given to children as individuals or in groups, except where it is to fulfil statutory duties relating to the National Curriculum or requirements specified in the syllabus for a public exam.
- Ingredients and materials for cooking, Art, Craft, Design & Technology activities. Materials will be charged for (or parents will be required to supply these) if they have indicated in advance a wish to own the finished product.
- Activities which take place outside school hours and which are not a statutory part of the National Curriculum e.g. outings, visits, sports coaching, cycling courses, clubs.
- Trips and activities during the school day (through a voluntary contribution)
- Activities which involve children in nights away from home will include charges for board, lodging and travel which is outside of school hours (Cost of travel and activities within school hours will be through voluntary contribution). [In deciding whether travel is during or outside of school hours the school uses the definition in the LA's memorandum No89. ] Families in receipt of the benefits listed below will be exempt from these charges. The costs will not exceed the actual cost of provision.

( The list is not exhaustive)

### **Voluntary Contributions**

When organising school trips, visits or activities which enrich the curriculum and educational experience of the children, the school invites parents to contribute to the cost. All contributions are voluntary; however, should we not receive sufficient contributions to make the activity viable it might be cancelled. If a parent wishes their child to take part in a school trip or event, but is unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution, we do allow the child to participate fully in the trip or activity. The school will provide a breakdown of how trips and activities are funded should this be required on request.

If a trip goes ahead, it may include children whose parents are unwilling or unable to make a voluntary contribution. We do not treat these children differently from any others. Sometimes the school pays additional costs in order to support the visit. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded and the school provides this information on request.

Please note: “Any charge made in respect of individual pupils must not exceed the actual per pupil cost of providing the optional extra activity, divided equally by the number of pupils participating. It must not therefore include an element of subsidy for any other pupils wishing to participate in the activity whose parents are unwilling or unable to pay the full charge” (from DfE 2012 Guidance

### **Breakages**

Legally, parents can be asked to pay for damage to and/or loss of school property. However, we do not usually charge for accidental damage to property.

We would consider making a realistic charge where property has been wilfully damaged. In cases of wilful damage, breakage or loss of equipment on loan to children, the Head Teacher, in consultation with the Chair of the Finance Committee may decide to charge. Each incident will be dealt with on its own merit and at their discretion.

### **Lost school equipment, books etc.**

Parents may be requested to replace school equipment, books etc. which have been lost by their child.

### **Financial Support**

In order to minimise costs to parents, wherever possible the school will subsidize activities. Parents have a right to know how each trip is funded and the school provides this information on request.

### **Optional Extras**

School may charge for activities known as “optional extras” that are provided wholly or mainly outside school hours , for example after school recreational or sporting clubs, travel, materials and equipment, non teaching staff costs, entrance fees, insurance costs.

### **Residential Visits**

Different rules apply for residential activities. At Packington our residential visits take place largely during school time and as such we ask for a voluntary contribution towards the education element of the visit and make no charge for this part of the visit should parents be unwilling or unable to pay.

However, we do make a charge to cover the costs of board and lodging. We also charge for transport costs and optional extras that fall out of school hours (see above). Parents who are in receipt of the following benefits are exempt from paying the cost of board and lodging as well as transport and optional extras outside of school hours, however some of our parents make an individual decision to contribute either fully or in part:

- Income Support (IS)
- Income-based Job seekers Allowance (IBJSA)
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Child Tax Credit (CTC- providing that they do not also receive Working Tax Credit (WTC) and have an annual income assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, that does not exceed £16,190)
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Employment Support Allowance (Income Related (ESA/IR)

Parents who are unwilling to pay for board and lodging as well as transport and optional extras outside of school hours must collect their child at the end of the school day and return them at the beginning of the following school day. Where this is not possible because of the location of the visit then the Finance Committee will decide if it is financially viable for the visit to proceed.

Expressions of interest are sought prior to visits. If we do not receive sufficient funds then the activity will be cancelled.

### **Over subscription**

Should any activity or visit be oversubscribed then names will be drawn out of a hat. In order to make this transparent the draw will be made by a neutral person such as an independent parent with no child involved in the activity and witnessed by a non parent governor.

### **Music Tuition**

All children study music as part of the school curriculum for which there is no charge. A charge is made for individual or group music tuition if this is not part of the National Curriculum. Peripatetic music teachers teach individual or small group lessons. We make a charge for these lessons. Contributions towards these lessons for those parents in receipt of state benefits are given at the discretion of the Head Teacher and Finance Committee of the Governing Body and within limitations of the school budget. We give parents information about additional music tuition prior to the start of each academic year.

### **Swimming**

The school organises swimming lessons for all children in Years 2 – 6. These take place in school time and are part of the National Curriculum. The school undertakes to cover the cost of the pool hire and coaching costs, however, we invite parents to make a voluntary contribution towards the costs of transport to and from the pool. We inform parents when these lessons are to take place.

### **Additional In-School Charges**

#### **Private Photocopying/Telephone Calls**

The Governors have agreed that, under normal circumstances, no charge will be made for these services. Should a large number of copies or calls be required for personal use, permission will be sought from the Head Teacher and a donation will be charged to cover costs.

#### **Income from Sales**

Some goods will be sold through the school with the intention of making a small profit and this often takes the form of commission. Goods include; Book Fair sales and school photographs.

#### Income from Donations

Occasionally, the school will seek voluntary donations from events such as non-uniform days, sponsorship etc. The purpose for which the donation will be used is explained clearly to parents and visitors.

#### Income from Lettings

The Finance Committee review annually and set charges for the use of school premises. These costs are laid down in the School Letting Policy and include caretaking, insurance and energy costs. The school does not charge the PSA for use of the school for fund-raising activities.

#### **The Headteacher and Governing Body will ensure that:**

- Careful consideration is given to making up any shortfall in voluntary contributions from parents from the school's delegated budget.
- If a charge is made for each child it will not exceed the actual cost.
- In the case of visits and activities, no child will be excluded because the school has not received a voluntary contribution towards the cost involved.
- Whenever possible, parents are given sufficient notice of forthcoming trips and activities.

#### **Remissions or help with charges**

In order to remove financial barriers from disadvantaged pupils, the governing body has agreed that activities and visits where charges can legally be made will be offered at no charge or a reduced charge to families qualifying for Free School Meals for children in our school.

#### **Data protection of pupils and families**

Packington Primary School staff will ensure that where families are experiencing financial difficulties, their children are not publicly identified or stigmatised. Our methods of collecting voluntary charges, dinner money etc. do not identify children who are unable to contribute.

#### Links to other documents

This policy should be read along with the LA Charging Memorandum No 89.

#### **Review and Monitoring**

The Governing body will review this policy annually.

Signed:

Date: